

Message Text

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E.O. 11562: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (RUSH)

SUBJ: DEPUTY SECRETARY'S VISITS TO AUSTRALIA AND
PAPUA NEW GUINEA - SCHEDULING PROBLEMS

REF: (A) STATE 028851; (B) CANBERRA 773

1. SUMMARY: SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS HAVE EMERGED IN SCHEDULING OF MEANINGFUL PROGRAM FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY AND PARTY IN BOTH CANBERRA AND PORT MORESBY. ACTION RECOMMENDED: DEPUTY SECRETARY TO CHANGE ORDER OF VISITS, ARRIVING IN PORT MORESBY FEB 28 AFTER 1300 LOCAL TIME, DEPARTING MARCH 1 FOR CANBERRA IN TIME TO ARRIVE AT APPROXIMATELY 1130 LOCAL TIME. END SUMMARY.

2. SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS HAVE EMERGED IN THE SCHEDULING OF A MEANINGFUL PROGRAM FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY AND PARTY IN BOTH CANBERRA AND PORT MORESBY WHICH SUGGEST THAT CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO SUBSTANTIAL ALTERATION OF BOTH VISITS.

3. ALTHOUGH AUSTRALIAN DEPT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAD INITIALLY ASSURED US THAT WORTHWHILE PROGRAM COULD BE DEVELOPED FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY FEB 28, DESPITE PRESENCE OF QUEEN ELIZABETH FOR FORMAL OPENING OF PARLIAMENT, DFA CHIEF OF PROTOCOL TOLD CHARGE FEB 13 IT WILL BE VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO PREPARE MEANINGFUL
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PROGRAM FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY FEB 28. SIZE AND DIMEN-

SIONS OF ACTIVITIES DURING VISIT OF QUEEN, INCLUDING FORMAL OPENING OF PARLIAMENT AT 3:00 PM AND 9:00 PM BLACK TIE RECEPTION, HAVE CREATED PROBLEM. ALTHOUGH QUEEN NOW SCHEDULED TO LEAVE AUSTRALIA FOR LONDON LATE AFTERNOON (LOCAL TIME) FEB 28, PRINCE PHILLIP WILL REMAIN FOR EVENING RECEPTION. DFA CHIEF OF PROTOCOL HAS ACCORDINGLY SUGGESTED TO US THAT DEPUTY SECRETARY VISIT PORT MORESBY FEB 28 INSTEAD OF MARCH 1, COMING TO CANBERRA MARCH 1, DEPARTING FROM CANBERRA MARCH 2 FOR BALI.

4. SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS HAVE ALSO ARISEN REGARDING PROGRAM IN PORT MORESBY. AS REPORTED IN REF B, PLANNING HAS GONE FORWARD ON BASIS OF ARRIVAL IN PORT MORESBY AT 12:00 NOON MARCH 1, WITH DEPARTURE AT 3:00 PM MARCH 2 FOR BALI. HOWEVER, QANTAS, WHICH WOULD HANDLE SERVICING OF DEPUTY SECRETARY'S AIRCRAFT IN PORT MORESBY, HAS INFORMED AIR ATTACHE THAT IT WILL NOT RPT NOT BE POSSIBLE TO ACCOMMODATE VC-135 AT MORESBY BETWEEN HOURS OF 10:30 AND 1300. THERE IS ONLY SUFFICIENT HARDSTAND SPACE FOR TWO AIRCRAFT OF THE BOEING 707 OR 727 SIZE AT JACKSON FIELD, PORT MORESBY, AND TWO BOEING 727'S ARE PRESENT DAILY AT PORT MORESBY FROM 10:30 TO 1300, PROVIDING SERVICE TO AUSTRALIA. UNLESS COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS TO PORT MORESBY WERE CANCELLED FOR DAY DEPUTY SECRETARY'S AIRCRAFT WERE IN PORT MORESBY (AND WE DO NOT RPT NOT RECOMMEND EVEN APPROACHING AUSTRALIANS ON MATTER, DUE TO UNFORTUNATE IMPRESSION THAT WOULD BE CREATED), DEPUTY SECRETARY'S AIRCRAFT WOULD HAVE TO ARRIVE AFTER 1300 ON WHATEVER DATE IS SELECTED AND DEPART PRIOR TO 1030 FOLLOWING DAY. THIS WOULD MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY TO HOST LUNCHEON AS PLANNED, BUT BELIEVE WORTHWHILE PROGRAM COULD BE ARRANGED IN SHORTENED TIME SPAN AVAILABLE INVOLVING MEETINGS WITH CHIEF MINISTER SOMARE, HIS CABINET, AND OPPOSITION LEADERS.

5. EMBASSY HAS CANVASSED AVAILABLE ALTERNATIVES. DEPUTY SECRETARY'S VC -135 COULD LAND AT DARWIN OR
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CAIRNS, AND PORTION OF PARTY (NO MORE THAN 12 PERSONS) COULD BE FERRIED OVER TO MORESBY ON T-29 ASSIGNED TO USAFLO CANBERRA. SIZE AND WEIGHT OF T-29 MUCH LESS THAN VC-135, AND NO PARKING PROBLEMS INVOLVED FOR IT AT PORT MORESBY. HOWEVER, THIS WOULD INVOLVE BREAKING UP DEPUTY SECRETARY'S PARTY. MOREOVER, AS WE HAVE NO RPT NO CONSULATE OR MISSION IN MORESBY, AND T-29'S COMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITY IS SERVERLY LIMITED, MOVING

DEPUTY SECRETARY TO MORESBY ON T-29 WILL MEAN LEAVING HIM EFFECTIVELY OUT OF TOUCH FOR CLASSIFIED COMMUNICATIONS, APART FROM WHATEVER WE COULD ASK AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT TO PASS TO HIM, OR COULD SOMEHOW HANDLE OVER TELEPHONE.

6. ACTION RECOMMENDED: BELIEVE BEST COURSE WOULD BE FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY TO VISIT PORT MORESBY FEB 28, ARRIVING AFTER 1300 LOCAL TIME, DEPARTING MARCH 1 FOR CANBERRA IN TIME TO ARRIVE APPROXIMATELY 1130 LOCAL TIME. HARROP

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